Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada

BOOKS.

"En hoexkens ende boexkens."

True Stories from English History. By OSCAR BROWNING. (Griffith, Farran & Co.) "The aim of the writer of this book has been that it should be readable, and should be history. It deals with the early, middle, and later periods of our annals, and, although they do not form a continuous narrative, it is hoped that nothing will have been left out which it is important that young people should know. The writer has aimed at simplicity of subject and treatment, and he has avoided, as far as possible, the multiplication of dates and proper names." We cannot do better than quote Mr. Browning's preface, by way of giving some idea of the scope of the book. It is carefully sifted "history" completely free from the mythical element. The name of the author is ample guarantee that we are under the lead of a safe guide, and that these "True Stories" are well-told tales.

We should like to recommend a very admirable series of text-books for young students of twelve or thirteen and onwards, published by Mr. John Murray, and edited by Dr. William Smith. Those of us who know Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, Smith's Classical Dictionaries, Latin Dictionaries, &c., are prepared to value the encyclopædic grasp, scholarship, clearness of arrangement, and simplicity of style, which mark the productions of an editor who has done Herculean work in the cause of education. The volumes (3*s.* 6*d.* each) follow the lines of Mr. Murray's invaluable "Student's" series, but they are not epitomes, but original works written with a view to minds of less grasp than the mature student is supposed to have.

A Smaller Scripture History of the Old and New Testament should be in the hands of every father and mother. It is pleasant reading, and the children enjoy it on Sunday afternoons; it has coloured maps and illustrations, and the delightful way in which the light thrown upon the sacred text by modern research is woven in with the narrative, while yet the rhythm and the feeling of the English Bible is preserved, tends to quicken the interest and preserve the reverence of the young reader (or listener) in a quite remarkable way. The father who reads this little work steadily through with his children on Sunday afternoons, they using their Bibles for reference, will pass delightful hours; and will, at the same time, lay a solid basis for the religious education of his children.

The *Smaller History of Greece* is also extremely well done. Plutarch is closely followed, and the fine Saxon-English of Langhorne's translation is preserved in many of the narratives. The child who has read Kingsley's "Heroes," Church's "Tales from Homer," or the "Tanglewood Tales," will

be prepared to read this "Smaller History of Greece" with intelligence and profit.

Luwig Richter's Designs: The Lord's Prayer, The Sunday, The Seasons.—Mr. Ruskin, in one of his lectures on "The Art of England," spoke thus: "I hope that in many English households there may be found already—I trust some day there may be found wherever there are children who can enjoy them, and especially in country village schools—the three series of designs by Ludwig Richter in illustration of the Lord's Prayer, of the Sunday, and of the Seasons. Perfect as types of easy line drawing, exquisite in ornamental composition, and refined to the utmost in ideal grace, they represent all that is simplest, purest, and happiest in human life, all that is most strengthening and comforting in nature and in religion. They are enough in themselves to show that, whatever its errors, whatever its backslidings, this century of ours has, in its heart, understood and fostered, more than any former one, the joys of family affection and of household piety.

For the former fairy of the woods Richter has brought to you the angel on the threshold; for the former promises of distant Paradise, he has brought the perpetual blessing, "God be with you"; amidst all the turmoil and speeding to and fro, and wandering of heart and eyes which perplex our paths and betray our wills, he speaks to us continuous memorial of the message, "My peace I leave with you."

In the "Ethics of the Dust" also he wrote in reference to one of the same lovely illustrations: "The most vital and beautiful Christian temper rests joyfully in its conviction of the multitudinous ministry of living angels, infinitely varied in rank and power. You all know one expression of the purest and happiest form of such faith as it exists in modern times in Richter's lovely illustrations of the Lord's Prayer. The real and living death-angel, girt as a pilgrim for journey, and softly crowned with flowers, beckons at the dying mother's door; child angels sit talking face to face with mortal children among the flowers. Hold them by their little coats lest they fall on the stairs; whisper dreams of heaven to them, leaning over their pillows, carry the sound of the church bells for them far through the air; and even descending lower in service, fill little cups with honey to hold out to the weary bee."

These designs can be procured through Mr. William Ward, 2 Church Terrace, Richmond, Surrey. The price of the Lord's Prayer or the Sunday is, I think, 10*s.* 6*d.* each; and the Four Seasons, each containing fifteen subjects, is about 30*s.* the set.

I have been the happy possessor of these illustrations for many years, and I have found them an unfailing source of pleasure to young and old. A few shown to young people on Sunday afternoons give scope, in some cases, for genial laughter after graver hours, and children with any cultivation dwell on the details with delight. The small sheets require, like all engravings, careful handling, and should be *shown* to children, not left to them. These dainty "Home Pictures" are quite a mother's treasure, and become loved as things both new and old.

J. F.